



**President's**  
Policy Statement  
University Policy Library

<b>Operational Area:</b>	Administration and Operations
<b>Responsible Executives:</b>	Chief Academic Officer, Chief Operating Officer, and Chief Strategy Officer
<b>Responsible Offices:</b>	Offices of Academic Affairs, Facilities Management, Human Resources, and University Communications
<b>Effective:</b>	June 1, 2023

## University Closures

### Administration and Operations

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### **I. Introduction**

- A. **Authority:** Colorado Revised Statutes (C.R.S.) § 23-54-102, *et seq.* (2023) authorizes the Trustees of Metropolitan State University of Denver (“MSU Denver” or “University”) to establish rules and regulations to govern and to operate the University and its programs. The MSU Denver Trustees retain the authority to approve, to administer, and to interpret policies pertaining to University governance. The MSU Denver Trustees authorize the MSU Denver President to approve, to administer, and to interpret policies pertaining to University operations.
  
- B. **Purpose:** MSU Denver is committed to protecting the health and safety of the University community, as well as to accommodating scheduled University activities, which may include but are not limited to: classes, labs, study sessions, rehearsals,



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events, and sports practices. This policy provides guidance to MSU Denver students, employees, and other community members when severe weather or another emergency necessitates a campus closure. This policy also provides guidance on situations when the University is closed for business and the campus is open. Guidance on remote operations when campus is closed is also included in this policy.

- C. Scope:** This policy applies to MSU Denver students, employees (including student employees, faculty, affiliate faculty, and staff), tenants, businesses, and visitors. This policy provides guidance on Auraria Higher Education Center and University-wide closure and applies to all academic and administrative units, including MSU Denver colleges, departments, programs, and administrative offices operating on the Auraria Higher Education Center. This policy does not apply to individual building or office closures or to external sites. Any program-specific policies should not directly conflict with the University-wide policy, and in the case of a conflict, the University-wide policy shall supersede any other internal processes. MSU Denver students and employees who participate in off-site, external, experiential-learning or instruction programs should follow the policies outlined by the external entity.



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## II. Roles and Responsibilities

- A. **Responsible Executives:** Provost and Executive Vice President of Academic Affairs/Chief Academic Officer, Vice President of Finance and Administration/Chief Operating Officer, and Chief Strategy Officer
- B. **Responsible Administrators:** Director of Operations and Maintenance, Associate Vice President of Curriculum, Academic Effectiveness, and Policy Development, Associate Vice President of Human Resources, Associate Vice President of Strategic Communications
- C. **Responsible Offices:** Offices of Academic Affairs, Facilities Management, Human Resources, and University Communications and Marketing
- D. **Policy Contacts:**
  1. *Director of Operations and Maintenance Sharon Lorince*, 303-605-7321, [slorince@msudenver.edu](mailto:slorince@msudenver.edu)
  2. *Associate Vice President of Curriculum, Academic Effectiveness, and Policy Development Shaun Schafer*, 303-615-5275, [sschafe5@msudenver.edu](mailto:sschafe5@msudenver.edu)
  3. *Associate Vice President of Human Resources Stacy Dvergsdal*, 303-605-7218, [sdvergsd@msudenver.edu](mailto:sdvergsd@msudenver.edu)
  4. *Associate Vice President of Strategic Communications Andrea Smith*, 303-877-6592, [asmit346@msudenver.edu](mailto:asmit346@msudenver.edu)



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#### E. Additional Roles and Responsibilities:

1. The **Office of Academic Affairs** is responsible for overseeing the academic components of this policy and for serving as a liaison with students, faculty, academic departments, deans' offices, and academic-support offices to address academic concerns related to this policy.
2. The **Office of Facilities Management** is responsible for confirming that buildings are locked when campus is closed and for addressing, coordinating, and communicating any safety concerns as a result of campus closure, whether through the Auraria Higher Education Center (AHEC) or directly with appropriate contractors, ensuring the buildings continue to operate at unoccupied capacity to protect building infrastructure.
3. The **Office of Human Resources** is responsible for assisting employees in tracking and recording their leaves on their monthly timesheets.
4. The **Office of University Communications and Marketing** is responsible for capturing and disseminating information pertinent to all constituents regarding University closures to employees, students, and constituents through University mass communication channels.
5. **AHEC Communications** is responsible for
  - a. sending a Rave alert to the campus community with information about the closure;
  - b. notifying media agencies;
  - c. updating the AHEC website and social media channels; and
  - d. Recording an updated closure message on the AHEC 24-hour information phone line (1-877-556-3637).



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### III. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the following terms are defined as:

- A. **Essential Employee** means an employee who performs duties deemed essential to the operation of the daily enterprise, whose absence would likely cause the University to suffer operational injury, or whose duties include assisting in disaster recovery, or more simply those who conduct a range of services essential to the operation of the University, who may differ based on the day’s circumstances.
- B. **Remote Operations** means working outside the office via internet, phone, or other electronic communication method.

### IV. Policy Statement

- A. **Campus Closure due to Emergency or Severe Weather.** Metropolitan State University of Denver (MSU Denver) is committed to creating a safe and equitable learning environment for all. MSU Denver must adhere to the Auraria Higher Education Center’s (AHEC’s) Campus Closure Policy and Procedures when making decisions regarding closure of MSU Denver business and facilities due to severe weather or another emergency. Campus closure, early dismissal, and late start decisions are made collectively and cooperatively by leadership from the Auraria Higher Education Center and from each of the three educational institutions on the



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Auraria campus—MSU Denver, University of Colorado Denver, and Community College of Denver. The safety of students, faculty, and staff is paramount. Decisions regarding campus closure must be made with due consideration to the safety and teaching, service, and outreach missions of the majority of students, faculty, and staff. Students, faculty, and staff should evaluate their individual circumstances carefully, exercise appropriate judgment, and take responsibility for their safety when making decisions during an emergency.

- B. University Closure due to Non-Emergency.** The Chief Executive Officer and President of MSU Denver may decide to suspend University operations, to conduct operations remotely, or to otherwise alter University operations due to a non-emergency while campus is open for business. The MSU Denver President must communicate in a timely manner with MSU Denver students, employees, tenants, businesses, visitors, and others regarding suspension or alteration of University operations. Examples include holiday early release or special events.
- C. University Closure Options.** According to AHEC’s campus closure policy, campus closures are classified based on the time of the closure:
  1. **Full-day Closure:** Campus is closed for the full, academic and work day.
  2. **Late Start:** Campus is closed until a designated time before which no work, class sessions with in-person instruction, or class sessions with real-



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time virtual instruction will take place and after which regular schedules should resume.

3. **Early Close:** Campus closes at a designated time after which no work, class sessions with in-person instruction, or class sessions with real-time virtual instruction will take place until the following day.
- D. **Full-Day Closure.** A full-day University closure applies to all MSU Denver students, employees (including student employees, faculty, affiliate faculty, and staff), tenants, businesses, and visitors.
1. **Faculty and Students.** All real-time virtual or in-person instruction is canceled for the day. Student effort in all classes may continue at the discretion of the student, but no real-time virtual or in-person instruction will occur. Any individual mandatory attendance policies for specific classes are suspended if campus is closed. Faculty members should not require students to attend in-person or online class sessions when campus is closed.
  2. **Staff. Essential Employees,** who are already pre-identified by their departments, such as facilities staff, must report in-person. Staff members who ordinarily work on campus are not required to report to campus and are not required to work remotely. Staff members who have a remote-work agreement in place also do not need to work during a campus closure unless instructed to



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by their supervisor for critical business needs. The University encourages flexibility and equity.

3. **Events.** The continuation of any event during a University closure must obtain a waiver from the MSU Denver President or delegate.

#### E. Late Start or Early Close

1. **Faculty and Students**

- a. **Late Start.**

- 1) **Class Sessions with Real-time Virtual or In-Person Instruction.**

If 1) a class session requires active instruction and student attendance, either in-person or online, and 2) it is scheduled to begin before the designated delayed start time, and 3) the delay takes up 50% or more of the course time, the class session will be canceled. Any class sessions scheduled on or after the delayed start time should resume as scheduled. For example:

- a. If the campus will open at 10 a.m. and a class session runs from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m., that session is canceled.
      - b. If the campus will open at 10 a.m. and a class session runs from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., students will attend the session when the campus opens.
      - c. If the campus will open at 10 a.m. and a class session runs from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. the session will occur as normal.





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2) *Class Sessions without Real-time Virtual or In-Person Instruction.*

If a class session does not require active instruction and student attendance, either in-person or online, student effort may continue at the discretion of the student. Impeded access to technology may inhibit timely completion of assignments or exams, and these considerations will be handled on a case-by-case basis between the student and faculty member.

3) As with all University policies, implementation of this guidance will require faculty discretion to navigate discipline-specific or unusual situations. The assumption is that the spirit of this guidance should be upheld to the best of the faculty member's ability.

b. **Early Close.**

1) *Class sessions with Real-time Virtual or In-Person Instruction.*

If 1) a class session requires active instruction and student attendance, either in-person or online, and 2) it is scheduled to end after the designated early close time, and 3) the early dismissal takes up 50% or more of the course time, that class session will be canceled. For example:

a. If campus will close at 2 p.m., and a class session runs from 1 p.m. - 3 p.m., that session is canceled.



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- b. If campus will close at 2 p.m., and a class session runs from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., that session will meet until, or slightly before, the early closure time.
  - c. If campus will close at 2 p.m., and a class session runs from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m., that session will meet.
- 2) *Class Sessions without Real-time Virtual or In-Person Instruction.*  
If a class session does not require active instruction and student attendance, either in-person or online, student effort may continue at the discretion of the student. Impeded access to technology may inhibit timely completion of assignments or exams, and these considerations will be handled on a case-by-case basis between the student and faculty member.
- 3) As with all University policies, implementation of this guidance will require faculty discretion to navigate discipline-specific or unusual situations. The assumption is that the spirit of this guidance should be upheld to the best of the faculty member's ability.



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#### F. Timely Communication.

MSU Denver will communicate with MSU Denver students, employees, tenants, businesses, visitors, and others in a relevant and timely manner regarding University closure. Generally, full-day closure and delay will be communicated via RAVE alert and email by 6:00 a.m. or within one hour of the closure decision.

#### G. Remote Operations during University Closure.

1. The Chief Executive Officer and President of MSU Denver may decide to transition to remote operations when conditions or other interruptions compromise the safety or productivity of its students, faculty, and staff or the efficiency of University operations. **Remote Operations**, as defined in this policy, require non-essential employees, including MSU Denver faculty and staff members, to work outside of the office via internet, phone, or other electronic communication method. **Remote Operations** will enable the University to remain open to perform key business functions to serve its students and the community.
2. When the MSU Denver President decides to conduct University-wide operations remotely, non-instructional employees should refer to their departmental guidelines and work with their supervisors to determine their work plan during the remote-operations period. Supervisors should exercise appropriate discretion and flexibility concerning non-instructional staff who



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are able to work from home. When possible, non-instructional staff who are not able to work remotely will make alternate arrangements with their supervisor. A move to **Remote Operations** will not affect existing Flexible Work Arrangements.

- A move to **Remote Operations** requires faculty members (*i.e.*, an instructor who leads the impacted class/lab) to cancel their affected in-person classes and to make other appropriate arrangements with their students to ensure continuity of academic operations.

#### H. Accountability for Classroom Obligations and Work Duties.

- MSU Denver students and employees should fulfill classroom obligations and work duties that were impacted or delayed by a closure at a later date. An Auraria Campus or University closure does not mean that students, faculty, or staff members are unaccountable for any classroom content or work duties that would have occurred on the closure day, but instead, should plan to fulfill those obligations on a different day. At the discretion of the faculty member in the best interests of the student-learning experience, assignment deadlines may be extended by the same duration as the closure or to the end of the term, whichever comes first. Faculty should reference departmental guidelines for managing instruction and meeting contact hours in the same manner as when a



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class meeting must be cancelled due to illness, weather, transportation difficulties, *etc.*

2. In accordance with the University Final Exam Policy, students are required to complete final exams with some exceptions.

#### 1. **Leaves of Absence for University Closure for Administrators, Faculty, and Staff**

1. **Full-time Employees** are granted administrative leave during a University Closure in accordance with University policies on leaves of absence. Employees who work an alternate schedule should coordinate with their supervisor and the Office of Human Resources to determine the appropriate amount of administrative leave to be granted. The University encourages flexibility and equity.
2. **Temporary Employees**, such as student employees and hourly employees, are not granted administrative leave during a University closure. Temporary employees may not work remotely during a University closure and may work additional hours on another day during the same pay period. Temporary employees may work remotely when operations are conducted remotely.
3. **Essential Employees** who perform work during a University emergency closure may receive compensatory time, calculated at one and one-half times the number of hours worked, should they work more than 40 hours within a workweek and are eligible for overtime. Employees who work during a



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University emergency closure are encouraged to work with their supervisors on flexing time within the workweek. Please reference the University's Alternative Work Schedule Policy.

4. See **Procedures** for more details on reporting leave.

### **V. Procedures**

A. **Auraria Campus Closure due to Emergency or Weather.** Please read the Auraria Campus Closure Policy and Procedures.

B. **University Closure due to Non-Emergency.** The Chief Executive Officer and President of MSU Denver may decide to suspend University operations, to conduct operations remotely, or to otherwise alter operations and must communicate in a timely manner with MSU Denver students, employees, tenants, businesses, and visitors.

1. All students, faculty, and staff members will be notified directly via email to their @msudenver.edu account.
2. Notification will also be posted on the University website, including a banner on the University's homepage and a time-stamped alert on [www.msudenver.edu/emergency](http://www.msudenver.edu/emergency), and social media channels.
3. Depending on the situation, University constituents may also be notified via SMS, Canvas alert, or other University-owned and implemented technology and software with mass-messaging capability.



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**C. Reporting a Leave of Absence due to Campus or University Closure.**

MSU Denver employees are granted an administrative leave of absence when the University or campus closes. MSU Denver employees will submit leave hours due to University or campus closure (i.e., snow closure, emergency closure, holiday early release) to the Office of Human Resources. If an employee has an approved absence prior to the closure, the employee receives the closure hours. For example, if the employee was on annual leave for 8 hours of vacation and the campus closes for snow 3 hours prior, the employee would report 5 hours of vacation and 3 hours of campus closure.

**D. Building Access during a Campus or University Weather Closure**

AHEC and MSU Denver-maintained buildings are locked during a campus or University closure. MSU Denver employees may enter buildings during a campus or University weather closure, such as before a late opening. MSU Denver employees must use their MSU Denver identification (ID) and badge to access buildings during a campus or University closure. MSU Denver constituents who visit campus during a full-day closure or who arrive early on a late-start day must park in a parking garage to maintain snow-clearing operations in campus parking lots. AHEC associates will not prevent an MSU Denver constituent with the appropriate identification and access from entering a building during a campus or University weather closure.



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#### VI. Related Information

Learn more about...

- A. Auraria Campus Closure Policy and Procedures ([Auraria Campus Policies](#))
- B. Auraria Campus Police Department, [ahcc.edu/services-departments/police](http://ahcc.edu/services-departments/police)
- C. State of Colorado Employee Handbook, [dhr.colorado.gov/state-employees/employee-resources/employee-handbook](http://dhr.colorado.gov/state-employees/employee-resources/employee-handbook)
- D. Colorado Wage Act, C.R.S. § 8-4-101, *et seq.*
- E. Higher Learning Commission Federal Compliance Requirements Policy (FDCR.A.10.010), [hlcommission.org/Policies/federal-compliance-requirements.html](http://hlcommission.org/Policies/federal-compliance-requirements.html)
- F. [MSU Denver Alternative Work Arrangements for Staff Policy](#)
- G. [MSU Denver Communications](#)
- H. [MSU Denver Emergency Info - After An Emergency](#)
- I. [MSU Denver Emergency Notification Procedures](#)
- J. [MSU Denver Emergency Notification System](#)
- K. [MSU Denver Emergency Notification System FAQs](#)
- L. [MSU Denver Emergency Preparedness](#)
- M. MSU Denver Faculty Employment Handbook
- N. MSU Denver Final Exam Policy ([Academic Catalog](#))
- O. [MSU Denver Leaves of Absence for Administrators and Staff Policy](#)
- P. [MSU Denver Leaves of Absence for Faculty Policy](#)
- Q. MSU Denver Student Employment Handbook
- R. U.S. Fair Labor Standards Act





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### VII. History

- A. **Effective:** June 1, 2023
- B. **MSU Denver Review History:**
  - 1. **University Policy Advisory Council Review:** April 26, 2022; November 30, 2022; February 2, 2023
  - 2. **Community Review:** December 12, 2022, to January 20, 2023
  - 3. **President's Cabinet Review:** March 30, 2023; May 11, 2023
- C. **Review Schedule:** This policy will be reviewed every three years or as deemed necessary by University leadership.

### VIII. Approval

Janine Davidson, Ph.D.  
President, Metropolitan State University of Denver

N/A

Chair, Board of Trustees, Metropolitan State University of Denver

